Direct

Washington, D. C. 20520

Special Assistant to the Secretary

Richardson

Sir:

In addition to the State/Defense people Richardson has been listed in the attached EUR memo, I also understand he has seen Dean Burch, Jack Veneman, Pat Maynihan, and Secretary Coleman at DOT.

Also for your background, attached are two recent press pieces on him: a 5/28 article in the London Evening Standard by its Washington correspondent, Jeremy Campbell, alleging that a middle-level White House staffer just returned from London with the "inside story" of ELR's discontent with his role, viz. that he is "steaming mad" that he has been cut out of things in much the same manner as Walter Annenberg; and a Karnow piece from the 5/17 New Republic on ELR's "overweening" ambitions, and how he was sent to London by you and the President to make his political maneuvering difficult.

Attachments:

As stated.

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FM USIS LONDON

TO USINFO WASHDC

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FOR IPS/PE ATTENTION VIRDEN.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY JEREMY CAMPBELL WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT OF THE LONDON EVENING STANDARD CIRCULATION APPROXIMATELY HALF A MILLION APPEARED IN TODAY'S PAPER WEDNESDAY MAY 28TH.

ARTICLE WAS HEADLINED "A LONDON LET-DOWN FOR THE AMBITIOUS MR. RICHARDSON."

TEXT BEGINS:

A MIDDLE LEVEL MEMBER OF PRESIDENT FORD'S WHITE HOUSE STAFF HAS JUST COME BACK FROM LONDON WITH AN INSIDE STORY OF WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN GROSVENOR SQUARE.

THE RESULT IS THAT REPORTS ARE NOW CIRCULATING AMONG NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS AND AT THE WHITE HOUSE THAT ELLIOT RICHARDSON, THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF ST JAMES, IS SHOWING SIGNS OF ACUTE DISCONTENT WITH A POST HE HAD BEEN LED TO EXPECT WOULD GIVE MUCH BROADER PLAY TO HIS TALENTS AND ENERGY THAN HAS [illegible]

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-430-6-7-0

"RICHARDSON IS STEAMING MAD," THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL SAID. "REAL TENSIONS ARE DEVELOPING IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HENRY KISSINGER. HE TOOK THE LONDON POST ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT HE WOULD BE A SUPER-AMBASSADOR, LICENSED TO PLAY A STRONG ROLE IN DEVELOPING AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD EUROPE. BUT KISSINGER KEEPS THE REINS OF POLICY IN HIS HANDS.

DIPLOMAT, ESSENTIALLY NO DIFFERENT FROM HIS PREDECESSOR, WALTER ANNENBERG."

EVEN FROM A DISTANCE OF THREE THOUSAND MILES, RICHARDSON IS AN OBJECT OF FASCINATION TO THOSE WHO PLAY THE GAME OF AMERICAN POLITICS. HIS MOODS ARE CLOSELY WATCHED. AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, IN WHICH RICHARDSON EXPOUNDS ON THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN ASIA, IS SPLASHED ACROSS EIGHT COLUMNS OF PRINT. AN ARTICLE IN THE NEW REPUBLIC OUTLINING HIS "LONG-RANGE STRATEGY" FOR ASCENDING TO THE PRESIDENCY IS WIDELY DISCUSSED ACROSS THE DINNER TABLES OF WASHINGTON.

WHEN HE ACCEPTED THE LONDON EMBASSY RICHARDSON EXPECTED TO BE THOROUGHLY INVOLVED IN THE POST-VIETNAM ISSUES OF ENERGY AND THE ECONOMY IN A EUROPE NEWLY SURFACING IN THE AMERICAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS, HOWEVER, DONALD RUMSFELD, FORD'S RIGHT-HAND MAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE, AND DR KISSINGER BOTH URGED FORD TO SEND RICHARDSON TO LONDON AS A WAY OF PUTTING HIS AMBITIONS ON ICE AND ISOLATING HIM FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE. PRESIDENT FORD, NO GOGGLE-EYED ADMIRER OF RICHARDSON, IS SAID TO REGARD THE COURT OF ST. JAMES AS A HUMANE KIND OF SANATORIUM IN WHICH A DANGEROUS CASE OF PRESIDENTIAL FEVER CAN SAFELY RUN ITS COURSE.

IN AN INTERVIEW JUST PUBLISHED WITH STANLEY KARNOW, A LEADING AMERICAN JOURNALIST, RICHARDSON APPEARED TO SIGNAL THE FACT THAT EMBASSY LIFE IS NOT BY ANY MEANS THE CHALLENGE HE WAS LOOKING FOR. KARNOW DEPICTS A MAN READY TO SQUANDER HOURS WITH VISITORS TALKING IN "ALMOST JAMESIAN PROSE" ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD WHILE DOODLING INTRICATE PATTERNS WITH A SET OF BRUSH PENS.

"HE SAYS, ZWHERE HIS TASKS AS A DIPLOMAT ARE SO UNDEMANDING HE HAS BEEN FINISHING A BOOK." THE BOOK, WHICH DEALS WITH THE PLIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL CAUGHT IN THE MESH OF THE MODERN BUREAUCRATIC STATE, SMACKS, IN AMERICAN EYES, OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL GROUNDWORK ON WHICH A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY IS USUALLY BASED.

KARNOW CALLS RICHARDSON URBANE, INTELLIGENT AND DECENT. "ON THE OTHER HAND," HE ADDS, ZHIS AMBITION IS OVERWEENING. HE IS DETERMINED TO ACHIEVE HIS GOALS THROUGH ANY MEANS."

IT WOULD SEEM NOW THAT RICHARDSON IS BEYOND THE STAGE OF MERELY SENDING UP SIGNALS OF HIS DISCONTENT. BY LETTING A WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL KNOW OF HIS COMPLAINTS AGAINST KISSINGER THE WHOLE CONTROVERSY IS DEVELOPING INTO ONE OF THOSE CORRIDOR COMBATS WASHINGTON DRAMATISES AND FEEDS UPON.

IT IS ALL THE MORE IRONIC FOR RICHARDSON THAT KISSINGER, AT A TIME WHEN U.S. MILITARY AND ECONOMIC PRESTIGE IS WANING, IS SHAKING UP THE WHOLE APPARATUS OF THE AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE SO AS TO GIVE GREATER POWER TO A TOUGH, YOUNG BREED OF DIPLOMAT. MEN IN THEIR EARLY 40S HAVE BEEN ROCKETING UP THROUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S ONCE COBWEBBY PROMOTION SYSTEM TO BE GIVEN PRIZE ASSIGNMENTS IN U.S. EMBASSIES ABROAD.

"THERE HAS NOT BEEN A DELIBERATE SKIPPING OF A GENERATION," A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID, ZBUT TO A DEGREE, THAT IS WHAT IS HAPPENING.

"WITH THE DEMANDS ON DIPLOMACY INCREASING, WE NEED A LOT OF HARD-CHARGING GUYS IN THE FRONT LINE AND WE ARE PUTTING THEM THERE. IN A WAY IT IS TRAGIC FOR SOME OF THE OLDER ONES, BECAUSE THE RULES WERE CHANGED ON THEM."

RICHARDSON, AT 54, WAS EXPECTED TO BE EXACTLY THAT KIND OF DIPLOMAT. NOW AMERICAN OBSERVERS STILL THINK HIS CAREER IS FULL OF INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES, VERY FEW LIKELY TO BE FULFILLED UNDER THE BIG EAGLE AT THE EMBASSY IN GROSVENOR SQUARE.

ENDS TEXT.

ITEM USINFO LONDON END

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waiting for Congress to approve a three million dollar ex gratia payment after which their leaders say they will return home. On May 5 the US House of Representatives passed the Bikini ex gratia payment authorization and sent it to the Senate. If the money is appropriated, the way may be paved for a return by next year. But that would create additional problems for there are 750 Bikinians and not enough homes for all of them. Furthermore, since the new coconut and other trees are still not bearing enough fruit for subsistence, food subsidies will be needed at least for the next four years.

Eniwetok poses the same sorts of problems. Clean-up there will be more difficult since the nuclear test program used two main residential islands for barracks and support work for almost 10,000 people. Some 75 buildings will have to be torn down, swimming pools dismantled and heavy clearing undertaken. The Defense Nuclear Agency, which has responsibility for the clean-up, estimated the job would cost $40 million. In 1972 President Nixon's Micronesian representative, in response to a letter from the Eniwetok leaders, announced permission would be granted for their return after clean-up and rehabilitation. A master plan for reconstruction of the atoll has been devised and approved by the Eniwetok people. However a Defense request for four million dollars to begin the clean-up was turned down last year by the House Armed Services Committee. In a sarcastic exchange Rep. Otis Pike suggested "We could give them a lot better monetary settlement if we didn't spend this $37 million cleaning it up couldn't we? I would think $37 million spread over 450 natives would sound rather appetizing." Then, as an afterthought, he added, "I would like to be their lawyer," a statement that drew a laugh from the audience.

This year two Eniwetok chiefs and the magistrate of Ujelang came to Washington to lobby for their clean-up bill. Working out of a downtown hotel room, using a Trust Territories lobbyist and a Micronesian legal services lawyer, they have sought to make their own case.

It seems certain that [illegible] home atolls. Whether their dependency on US subsidies from the US will end remains to be seen. There is a good argument that it never should. Some scientists believe and have told the Bikinians that their atoll is not safe for habitation. AEC, now ERDA, is still sampling both the vegetation and wildlife. In last month's trip urine samples were taken from some 25 people living on Bikini just to test the radioactivity levels developing in the bodies of island dwellers. The same process will be followed on Eniwetok. Medically monitoring life on those atolls, whether by US, Marshallese or even Japanese doctors, is a responsibility both Congress and the administration should readily bear.

Walter Pincus

Dreaming of the Presidency

Elliot Richardson

A year or so ago, when Elliot Richardson was delivering expensive lectures around the country in the wake of his dramatic resignation as former President Nixon's Attorney General, the audiences he addressed often behaved peculiarly. They would give him a standing ovation as he appeared on the platform but applaud only politely at the end of his speech, and that sort of reaction, which was fairly widespread, seemed to suggest two attitudes. It indicated, first, that people regarded Richardson as a symbol of rectitude for having quit the government rather than betray his own ethics by obeying Richard Nixon's order to fire Archibald Cox, the Watergate special prosecutor. Second, it may have meant that, after an hour of listening to Richardson, even his most ardent sympathizers were simply bored into silence by his tedious oratorical style. In either case the general response was hardly one that should have inspired him to reach for the White House, and his image has further faded from public view since December, when he went to England as US ambassador. But even though he admits to his limited appeal, Richardson still has hopes of becoming President some day, and, from the distance of London, he is attempting to shape a long-range strategy that will lead him in that direction.

Several sources who track Richardson's activities say that the decision to send him abroad, and his decision to go, both stemmed largely from domestic political considerations. As they relate it, former Gov. William Scranton of Pennsylvania and ex-Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, both of whom had been asked by President Ford last fall to propose administration appointments, recommended that Richardson be hired either as chief of the Office of Management and Budget or director of the Domestic Council. Their objective, I gather, was to bring Richardson back into the Republican fold after his bust-up with Mr. Nixon in order to show party liberals and independent voters

nt, and also because they respected his abilities as a skilled bureaucrat. Others among the President's aides advanced the idea that Secretary of State Kissinger be divested of his post as head of the National Security Council and that Richardson replace him. But, according to a couple of accounts, Kissinger and Donald Rumsfeld, who mainly counsels the President on foreign affairs, urged Mr. Ford to offer Richardson the London embassy in order to keep him in the administration but place him far enough away from Washington to make his possible political maneuvering difficult. The President, who is not known to be an enthusiastic Richardson fan, took that advice.

Richardson did not grab the offer immediately but

consulted associates, and they were divided. Some told him to stay in the US, outside the administration if necessary, and to begin working to win the presidential or vice presidential nomination in 1976. Others, including the more politically experienced among his cohorts, calculated that Richardson's best move at this stage would be to go overseas in a prestigious capacity, demonstrate by his willingness to serve Gerald Ford that he is loyal to the Republican party, and at the same time be far enough away from Washington to avoid responsibility should the administration get into trouble. Richardson weighed the options and chose London, reminding himself that five Presidents were once envoys there, and he is now trying to forecast what the future may hold. If he thought that Mr. Ford intended to step down after completing his present term, he would return home in the expectation that both liberal and conservative Republicans might view him as a plausible successor, since Vice President Rockefeller is old and has made many enemies during his career. If Mr. Ford runs again, as he asserts he will, Richardson would seek to come back to a cabinet post closer to the action. He longs to be Secretary of State, but he knows that Kissinger would have to be blasted out of that job, and besides, others in line for it include men nearer the President, like Laird and Rumsfeld. As alternatives he would like to command the Office of Management and Budget, direct the Domestic Council or take up where he left off at the Justice Department. For the moment, though, he consoles himself with the delights of London, where his tasks as a diplomat are so undemanding that he has been finishing a book that he started soon after leaving the Nixon administration.

The book deals with the issue of the individual in an increasingly complicated and homogenized society, and his relationship to a government that has become both pervasive and remote. Richardson can discourse for hours on the subject, as he has with me, speaking almost Jamesian prose as he doodles intricate patterns with brush pens of various colors, and although his formal lectures may put audiences to sleep, his private monologues can be brilliant. For there are few politi fewer who are willing to exercise their brains in an effort to grapple with the crises that lie ahead. Richardson's observation, based in part on his three years as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, is that the accumulation of problems like population growth, urbanization, transportation and pollution have contributed to the need for big government, and this has led to several unhealthy developments. It has facilitated the abuse of government power, as the Watergate scandals illustrated, and thereby eroded the confidence of the public in its leadership. It has submerged the individual to the degree that he has lost his identity, leaving him disillusioned, alienated and helpless. And, among other things, it has caused growing disenchantment among citizens who had come to believe that the government had the solution but found, in reality, that the federal mechanism has been pretty much of a sham. As evidence of this Richardson refers to what he calls the "legislative shell game," under which Congress persists in authorizing the same funds for fresh schemes in order to create the impression that it is striving to meet the social challenges of the day. Richardson also points out that the gap between resources and promises is such that it would cost $250 billion to provide services for people already covered by programs, and that would entail doubling the federal budget.

Richardson's answer to this dilemma is twofold. He has been an advocate of administrative reorganization, and he initiated a project to revamp HEW, one of the most unwieldy agencies in Washington, so that it could function more efficiently. Not much progress has been made in streamlining the department since his departure, however, and it is questionable whether his plan would have succeeded, since welfare is a field in which rival vested interests fight fiercely to protect their prerogatives. In a broader vein Richardson has been pushing for a radical decentralization of the government apparatus that would strengthen the authority of local administrations, partly to cut down Washington's interference and partly to give citizens the chance to identify with their communities. One of the arguments that used to be deployed against this concept is that it would widen the opportunities for corruption by small town bosses. But the Watergate affair proved, Richardson says, that dishonesty in high places is even worse, and, he adds, Tammany Hall for all its faults at least did something for the average person. This rather benign view of minor cupidity, incidentally, represents a change from the Richardson who in 1966 leveled unsubstantiated corruption charges against Francis X. Bellotti, his opponent in the race for attorney general of Massachusetts. Richardson won, but the shabbiness of his smear tactic tarnished the reputation he likes to nurture as a Boston brahmin of sterling integrity.

But then Richardson seems in many respects to be two different people. On the one hand he is urbane, in every sense the Rooseveltian patrician with a conscience. Indeed, his aides sometimes complain, he is so courteously inquisitive that he will squander hours with visitors, who, he thinks, may teach him something new. On the other hand, however, his ambition is overweening, and, as he demonstrated in his campaign against Bellotti, he is determined to achieve his goals through any means—even comparing his drive for fulfillment to his exhilaration during World War II, when he earned decorations for heroism as a medical corpsman. Oddly enough, though, his propulsion toward public power has not been characterized by great bravery. On the contrary Richardson has shown time and again, in the face of critical choices, that he is scarcely a profile in

courage.

In 1971, for example, he went to great pains to elaborate a busing plan for Austin, Texas, as part of a larger school desegregation approach. But Mr. Nixon instructed the Justice Department to repudiate the entire civil rights package in court, leaving an embarrassed and rather humiliated Richardson to explain to reporters in San Clemente that he had always underwritten the President's objections to busing. The next year Richardson similarly exerted himself with Democratic Sens. Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut and Russell Long of Louisiana to negotiate a welfare compromise bill. But Mr. Nixon, calculating that it was politically expedient during the election campaign to keep the welfare issue alive as a way of countering George McGovern's silly proposal to give $1000 a year to every American, pulled the rug out from under Richardson, who acquiesced with the rationalization that, after all, the President's bid for another four years in the White House deserved priority. Richardson suffered the same treatment when the Nixon administration, buckling under pressure from the American Medical Association, aborted a comprehensive medical care program that he had earlier termed "perhaps our most important emphasis in the delivery of health services." In none of these instances, his friends say, did Richardson feel that he had been placed in a "morally untenable" position. Instead he took the view that "you win some and lose some"—although, judging from his performance, Richardson's main victory was his ability to hang on in the Nixon administration despite these consistent defeats. He was undoubtedly appreciated as well because, as Charles Colson, the White House expert on dirty tricks, told Christopher Lydon of *The New York Times*, Richardson was "a team player."

Richardson's own explanation for his conduct, especially during some of the shoddy episodes of the Nixon tenure, is that only procedure is important, as it was at the time of the "Saturday night massacre," and that a faithful civil servant does not resign over matters of substance. His critics contend, in reply, that Richardson c[illegible] his ideals, m[illegible] these interpretations are probably correct, and another point merits attention. It is that Richardson, despite his charm, rationality and glorious role in Watergate, is basically a conservative who had genuine admiration for Mr. Nixon, and who, even in his letter of regisnation following Cox's dismissal, asserted that "it has been a privilege to share in your efforts to make the structure of world peace more stable and the structure of our own government more responsive."

The record is clear, moreover, that Richardson's fundamental faith in President Nixon prompted him to lend his wholehearted support to US strategy in Indochina. He still defends Mr. Nixon's invasion of Cambodia in the spring of 1972 as having been constitutional, since, he explains, it was an "incidental corollary" to the US involvement in Vietnam, which he considers to have been legal. Although he recently said in a lecture at Harvard that "lies, evasions and half-truths are the poison of democratic institutions," he did not, as far as I can recall, speak out against the secret bombings of Cambodia that began in 1969. Nor did he, despite the entreaties of close associates, criticize the Nixon administration's bombing of North Vietnam in December 1972. I detect from talking to Richardson, in fact, that he is somewhat impatient with attempts by Congress to play a more significant role in foreign polity, and here his friends single out another complex distinction in his thinking. As they put it, Richardson believes that different rules apply to domestic and foreign affairs, since governments exercise more control at home but, in international relations, tend to be more "primitive" and less humane. Or, as one of his aides explains it, Richardson regards foreign affairs as an arena of "conflicting moralities," and, as I understand it, he might be willing to stretch the "due process" principles to which he claims to be attached in the realm of domestic behavior. This suggests that he might not differ drastically from Kissinger in his world outlook—if he ever replaces him.

Richardson's finest hours were certainly spent in charge of the Justice Department, where, in seven months in 1973, he made extraordinary headway in rooting out all kinds of shady practices. But his most publicized moments as Attorney General are still controversial. His bargain to allow former Vice President Agnew to escape a jail sentence was undertaken with the honorable and realistic apprehension that, had Richard Nixon been ousted, a felon might have entered the White House. Yet the Agnew deal raised the question, which continues to be asked, of whether prominence is a passport to exoneration. Richardson acted more forthrightly in the Cox case, since he had named the Watergate special prosecutor independently of the White House, and, consonant with his adherence to "due process" he was bound to protect him. Here again, however, Richardson was aware that Mr. Nixon planned to purge Cox two weeks

suggests that Richardson may have been hesitant to make a fuss until he had no other choice.

There are too many variables in presidential races to rule out any possibility, and, at the age of 54, Richardson has time on his side. Thus he can afford to linger for awhile in London, scanning his prospects from afar and dreaming. Life is less tumultuous than it would be in Washington, but Richardson has not abandoned hope. "I've always wanted to live abroad," he says with an ironic chuckle that, I suspect, signifies that he is ready to fly home tomorrow.

Stanley Karnow